



State of South Carolina
Office of the Lieutenant Governor

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**LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR BAUER OPENS SC'S FIRST
INFORMATION CENTER FOR SENIORS**

(Columbia) - South Carolina Lt. Gov. Andre Bauer, head of the state's Office on Aging, will formally open the state's first Aging and Disability Information Center in Aiken on December 1 as part of a national pilot project to streamline information about support and resources available to aging citizens.

"I want the Aiken center to serve as a prototype for similar centers across the state," said Lt. Governor Bauer. "Our vision is to have resource centers in every community serving as highly visible and trusted places where people can turn for information on the full range of long-term support options for senior citizens and their families."

Initially encompassing Aiken and Barnwell counties, the mission of the pilot center is to provide information and assistance to help seniors, adults with physical disabilities and their families access services they need to live as independently as possible. This is the first such center in South Carolina, one of twenty four states chosen by U.S. Secretary of Health and Human Services Tommy Thompson to develop innovative resource center models.

Long-term support refers to a wide range of in-home, community-based and institutional services and programs designed to help individuals with disabilities. "In many communities, services are often provided by a number of agencies, which can add confusion to the process," Mr. Bauer added. "One system, with everyone working together, should streamline the process and make life a little easier for those who most need assistance."

The Center will work with a network of partner agencies and organizations to provide consumers with information about services in the community, assist them in understanding their available benefits and help them take the necessary steps to obtain the services they need. The new pilot Center will be located at the Lower Savannah Council of Governments office in Aiken and will offer information on everything from programs to assist with medications to insurance benefits counseling, caregiver support and options for accessing resources to deal with a crisis.

The Lieutenant Governor's office assumed direction of the State Bureau of Senior Services in July, renaming it the Lieutenant Governor's Office on Aging. This move gives South Carolina seniors a prominent voice in government and allows for more accountability in the office.

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